User's Guide

For the

DockPod Docking Station

Model #: RPDOCKU2FA

Windows & Mac

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Welcome

Thank you and congratulations on your purchase of DockPod, the Docking Station for RocketPod Hi-Performance Peripherals from AcomData.

This guide contains instructions on how to connect your DockPod to your computer and stack on RocketPod modules using the patented Stack&Play™ system. For instructions pertaining to the usage of a specific RocketPod product, please see the User's Guide for that product.

Please read this guide carefully before using your DockPod, and retain it for future reference.

Package Contents

The package should contain the following items:

- DockPod Docking Station
- FireWire cable (6-pin to 6-pin)
- USB 2.0 cable (compatible with USB 1.x)
- AC adapter and power cord
- User's Guide
- Warranty Registration Card

If you are missing any of the items listed above, please contact AcomData Customer Service at customerservice@acomdata.com or call 1-800-470-4495 or (909) 348-0680.

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Product Registration for Warranty Coverage

Please take a few moments to register your AcomData product. Registration is required in the event that your product needs warranty service. Also, please retain your sales receipt from the purchase of this product; a copy of the sales receipt is also required to attain warranty service.

Two ways to register:

1. Fill out and return the Warranty Registration Card included in the package;
2. Register your AcomData product online at www.acomdata.com. To register, click on the Customer Support button and follow the instructions.

Online registration entitles you to free online support services, including online tech support and customized software updates.

Precautions

Be sure to follow the precautions listed below. Failure to follow these precautions may cause damage to your AcomData product and void the warranty.

- Read this User's Guide carefully and follow the correct procedures for installing and using the device.
- Do not open the device or attempt to disassemble or modify it. If it appears to be malfunctioning, contact AcomData Technical Support.
- Never expose the device to rain or use it near water or in damp or wet conditions.
- Never place containers on it containing liquids which may spill onto the device. This can damage the device and increase the risk of electric shock, short-circuiting, fire or personal injury.
- Make sure that the computer and the device are electrically grounded. If the device has a three-prong (grounded) plug, never plug the device into a two-prong (non-grounded outlet).

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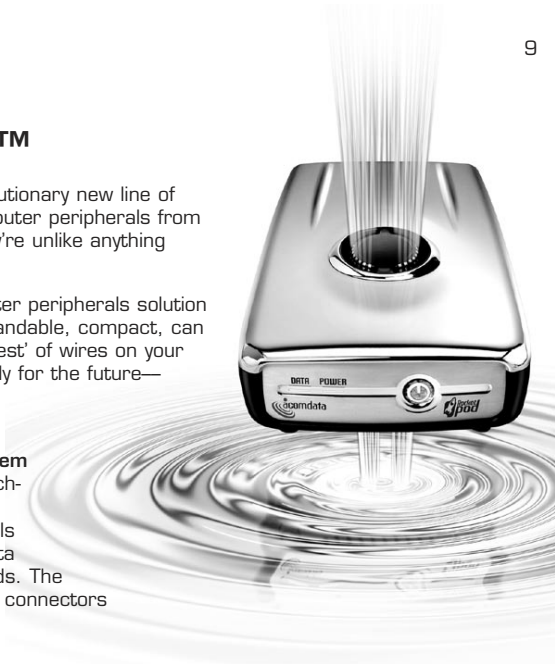
- Do not expose the device to temperatures outside the range of 5° C to 40° C (41° F to 104° F). Doing so may damage the device or disfigure its casing.
- Do not use a third-party AC adapter or power cord. Doing so may damage the device.
- Do not bump, jar or drop the device as this may damage it or result in loss of data.
- Do not try to set the device on its side; it is not designed to be placed on its side.
- Do not disconnect any cables while the device is powered on.
- AcomData highly recommends that you regularly back-up the files stored on your hard drive(s). AcomData is not responsible for any data loss, nor will AcomData perform any recovery of lost data or files.

About RocketPod™

RocketPod is a revolutionary new line of hi-performance computer peripherals from AcomData—and they're unlike anything you've seen before.

If you want a computer peripherals solution that is portable, expandable, compact, can eliminate the 'rat's nest' of wires on your desktop—and is ready for the future—you want RocketPod.



Patented Stack & Play™ System
This revolutionary technology lets you stack RocketPod peripherals without additional data cables or power cords. The patented Stack&Play connectors

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built into RocketPod devices safely and seamlessly relay power and data signals between stacked RocketPod modules.

Modular Design
Connect a DockPod Docking Station to your computer and then stack on the RocketPod modules that you need right now. Then, simply add more modules as you need them—and as new RocketPod products become available. You can stack any combination of up to five RocketPod modules onto your DockPod.

Portable
Super-compact size and grab-and-go convenience make it a snap to take RocketPod peripherals on the go:
• transfer large amounts of data to another computer;
• bring your work to and from your home and office;
• secure your daily backups off-site;
or whatever reason you may have to make your data portable.

Hi-Speed USB 2.0 and FireWire
No matter what interface you choose, you get blazing performance. You can even combine USB 2.0 and FireWire RocketPod modules in the same stack with the DockPod Docking Station.

Hot Swappable
This is the way hot swapping was truly meant to be. Add or remove RocketPod peripherals without turning off your computer—or fussing with cables.

Mac or PC
All RocketPod modules are compatible with both Mac and PC.

Rugged and Stylish
With solid metal alloy tops, rugged construction and advanced technology, RocketPod peripherals are designed to give you years of reliable performance—and look great while doing it!

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DockPod at a Glance

Stack&Play™ Connector
Relays electrical power and data signals to stacked-on RocketPod modules.

Stack Light
Lights up when a link between the DockPod and stacked-on RocketPod module(s) is established.

Voltage Meter
Measures the amount of power used by stacked-on RocketPod modules.

Power Button
Lights up blue when the DockPod is powered on and ready.

On the back panel

FireWire (IEEE 1394a) port

USB 2.0 port

AC adapter power port

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DockPod In-Depth

Stack&Play™ Connector

Your DockPod has two main functions
for up to five stacked-on RocketPod m
signals between those modules, your
connected to the same USB and/or Fi

The Stack&Play connector, located on the top-side of y
is the power and data link to your stacked-on RocketPod modules.
The standard power and data connections located on the back of the DockPod are used to connect DockPod to your computer.

Stack Light

The Stack light, located on the fascia of your DockPod, tells you when a proper link has been established between the DockPod and any stacked-on RocketPod modules. The Stack light will be illuminated when your DockPod is powered on and one or more RocketPod peripherals are stacked onto the DockPod.

Voltage Meter

Your DockPod is equipped with a built-in, analog voltage meter. The voltage meter measures the amount of power used by stacked-on RocketPod modules. Whenever there is a sufficient power fluctuation caused by some activity from a RocketPod module, the needle will fluctuate until a rest state is reached.

Power Button

When the DockPod is turned on, the power button illuminates with a stunning, deep blue color. DockPod's power button is also used to control power to stacked-on RocketPod modules.

FireWire and USB 2.0 Compatibility

Your DockPod is equipped with both a Hi-Speed USB 2.0 interface and a FireWire (IEEE 1394a) interface for the ultimate combination of compatibility, convenience and flexibility.

You can use the USB 2.0 connection, or the FireWire connection, or both at the same time. RocketPod Peripherals that are currently available or coming soon are available in either USB 2.0, FireWire, or both USB 2.0 and FireWire Combo configurations.

About FireWire

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FireWire—also known as iLink and the High Performance Serial Bus—is a cross-platform serial input/output technology for transferring data between computers and peripherals. Developed by Apple Computer and Texas Instruments, FireWire was adopted as an official standard by the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers; the official name is IEEE 1394x.

Isochronous data transfer at a rate of 400 Mbps
FireWire is suitable for applications where delayed or out-of-order data frames are unacceptable, such as digital video editing.

Supports up to 63 devices
FireWire devices can be linked in a daisy-chain configuration. With the use of FireWire hubs, up to 63 devices can be linked on a single FireWire bus.

Peer-to-peer architecture
FireWire devices are intelligent. Data transmission can take place without the need for input from the computer.

Cable length up to 4.5 m

On-bus power up to 45 W
Some FireWire devices do not need to be plugged into an outlet; they can get their power via the FireWire cable.

Plug & Play
You do not need to install drivers, assign unique ID numbers, or connect terminators.

Hot-swappable
Devices can be added and removed while the computer is running. Also, you can turn off the device when not needed.

About USB 2.0

USB (Universal Serial Bus) quickly became the standard for low-bandwidth computer peripherals, such as printers, scanners, and digital cameras. The second generation (USB 2.0) is up to 40 times faster, making it suitable for devices—such as external hard drives—that require large data throughput.

Data transfer rates up to 480 Mbps
Data transfer rates can vary depending on a number of factors, including available CPU resources.

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Supports up to 127 devices
Connecting more than one or two USB devices to a computer typically requires the use of one or more hubs; each hub can accommodate several USB devices.

Master-slave architecture
The computer (master) dictates data flow between attached devices (slaves).

Cable length up to 5 m

On-bus power up to 2.5 W
Suitable for low-powered devices such as flash card readers.

Plug & Play
You do not need to assign unique ID numbers, or connect terminators. On most operating system you do not need to install drivers.

Hot-swappable
Devices can be added and removed while the computer is running. Also, you can turn off a device when not needed.

Model #:
RPDOCKU2FA

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Interfaces:
FireWire (IEEE 1394a) – 400 Mbps
USB 2.0 – up to 480 Mbps

Physical
Dimensions:
W 4.7" x H 1.85" x L 7.4"
Weight: 450g

Electrical
Input DC voltage: .... 19~25V
Input current:..... 4A max
Input power: ..... 75W max
Output voltage:..... 12V +/- 5%
Output current: .... 5A average,
6A peak (10 sec)
Efficiency: ..... >90%

Environmental
Temperature:
- operating: .....+5 – +40 °C;
- non-operating: .-40 – +70 °C;

Humidity:
- operating : .....5 – 90 %
- non-operating: .5 – 95%

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System Requirements

System Requirement for PC

- Minimum 233MHz Pentium or equivalent processor
- Windows 98SE, ME, 2000, or XP
- Available USB port and/or FireWire port

Windows 98 users:

- Windows 98 First Edition does not support USB 2.0. If you connect DockPod to a PC running Windows 98 First Edition, any stacked-on USB 2.0 RocketPod modules will operate at USB 1.x speeds.
- Windows 98 First Edition does not support FireWire.

Windows XP users:
In order to use the USB 2.0 connection, you must have at least Service Pack 1 for Windows XP.

System Requirements for Mac

- Power Macintosh (G5, G4, Blue & White G3, iBook or iMac)
- Mac OS 9 or Mac OS X
- Available USB port and/or FireWire port

Mac OS 9 Users:

- We recommend using the latest version (OS 9.2.2). You can download the updates you need at http://docs.info.apple.com/article.html?artnum=75288.
- Mac OS 9 does not support USB 2.0. If you connect DockPod to a Mac running OS 9, any stacked-on USB 2.0 RocketPod modules will operate at USB 1.x speeds. Mac OS 9 requires USB Mass Storage Support version 1.3.5 or later. You can download the latest update at http://docs.info.apple.com/article.html?artnum=60394.
- Mac OS 9 requires FireWire Support and Enabler version 2.3.3 or higher. You can download the latest update at: http://docs.info.apple.com/article.html?artnum=86020.

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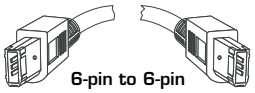
Connecting DockPod to Your Computer

Important Notes:

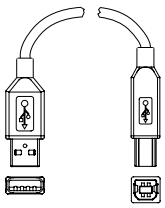
- *FireWire cables can only be properly inserted one way. Be sure to insert the plugs properly or you may damage the DockPod. Your DockPod came with a 6-pin to 6-pin FireWire cable. If you wish to connect your DockPod to a laptop/notebook computer, you may need to purchase a 6-pin to 4-pin FireWire cable.*
- *Each end of the USB cable has different plugs, called 'A' and 'B'. The 'A' end plugs into your computer or USB hub. The 'B' end plugs into the DockPod. Be sure to correctly insert the plugs, or you may damage the DockPod.*

FireWire cable



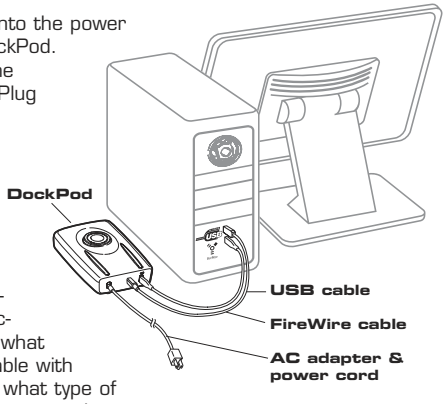
6-pin to 6-pin

USB cable



"A" Plug "B" Plug

1. Plug the AC adapter cord into the power port on the back of the DockPod. Plug the power cord into the socket on the AC adapter. Plug the other end into a three-prong outlet.



2. Plug the USB 2.0 and/or FireWire cable into the correct ports on your computer and the DockPod. You can plug in either the USB 2.0 connection or the FireWire connection or both, depending on what connections you have available with your computer system and what type of RocketPod modules you plan to stack onto your DockPod.
3. Press the power button on the DockPod; it will light up blue. The voltage meter only becomes active when a RocketPod module is stacked onto the DockPod.

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Important Note:
DockPod is not a desktop device, meaning DockPod itself will not appear in My Computer on PCs or on the Desktop on Macs. Only stacked-on RocketPod devices, such as DrivePod hard drives, may be recognized by your computer.

How to Stack&Play RocketPod Modules

Stacking RocketPod Modules

1. With the DockPod powered on, carefully place a RocketPod module onto it, making sure the orientation is the same and the devices are aligned. When placed correctly, the DockPod connector will mate with the connector at the bottom of the RocketPod module you are stacking, and all four feet of the module should sit firmly on the DockPod. When the connectors mate, you may hear a brief 'scratching' sound as the metal terminals in the connectors make contact. This is normal.
2. Press down with only moderate force on the upper device to make sure it is firmly seated. Do not use excessive force or you may damage the devices.

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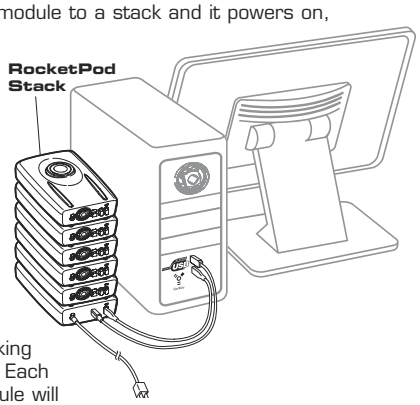
There is no need to press the power button of the stacked-on module. It will power on automatically if the DockPod is turned on. If the DockPod is not turned on, press the DockPod power button. After a few seconds, the stacked on module should power on automatically.

After you add a RocketPod module to a stack and it powers on, it may take 10 – 30 seconds for your computer to recognize it.

When at least one RocketPod module is stacked onto the DockPod and the DockPod is powered on, the Stack light on the DockPod will light up indicating a link is established.



To stack additional modules, simply follow the same stacking procedure described above. Each subsequent RocketPod module will power on automatically. You can stack up to five RocketPod modules onto your DockPod as shown in the illustration on page 26.

About Stacking USB 2.0 and FireWire RocketPod Modules

Part of the beauty and power of the RocketPod Stack&Play system is you can stack USB 2.0 and FireWire RocketPod modules together, and in any order. (There may be some exceptions. Refer to the individual User's Guides of your RocketPod peripherals for more information.)

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Removing Stacked-On Modules

There are several reasons why you may need to remove a RocketPod module from a stack:
• You need to quickly transfer very large amounts of data between two computers;
• You need to regularly access files stored on a DrivePod whether you are at home, at work, or on the road;
• You may have more than five RocketPod peripherals and you need to temporarily swap out one module for another;
• You use a DrivePod for data back-up, and you secure the DrivePod off-site at the end of each day.

Whatever your reason, the RocketPod Stack&Play system makes removing and replacing modules quick and easy.

1. Dismount the module you want to remove as well as any modules that may be stacked above it (follow the proper dismounting procedure for each module).

   What do 'mounting' and 'dismounting' mean? When a device is mounted, that means the computer 'sees' the device and is able to communicate with it. When you dismount a device, the computer no longer sees it. The device may still be running but the computer cannot access it, as though the device no longer exists.

2. Once all necessary modules are dismounted, you can safely remove them from the stack (even if they are still powered on). Replace any modules you had to remove in order to access the target module. They will power on automatically when stacked on.

Turning Off a RocketPod Stack

Important Note: With the exception of RocketPod devices with push-button dismount, the power button of a RocketPod device is rendered inactive when that device is used as a module in a stack; the power can only be controlled via the DockPod.

1. Dismount all stacked-on RocketPod modules according to the instructions in their respective User's Guides.

2. Press the power button on the DockPod. The entire RocketPod stack will power off.

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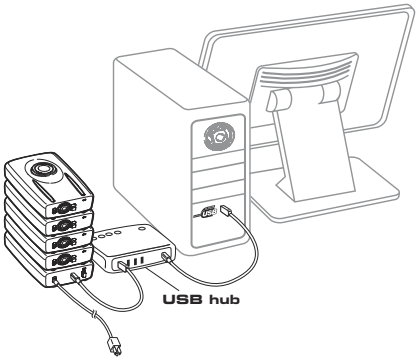
Connection Options

Connecting DockPod to a USB Hub



Important Notes:

- *Each USB hub that you connect to your computer decreases by one the number of USB 2.0 RocketPod modules you can stack. For example: if you have one USB hub, you can stack up to four USB 2.0 RocketPod modules; if you have two USB hubs, you can stack up to three USB 2.0 RocketPod modules. USB hubs do not affect the number of FireWire RocketPod modules you can stack; however, the total number of modules is still five.*
- *If the USB hub only supports USB 1.x, all stacked-on USB 2.0 RocketPod modules will operate at USB 1.x speeds.*

To connect the DockPod to a USB hub, connect the USB cable to the USB 2.0 port on the back of the DockPod and to an appropriate USB port on the hub, as shown in the illustration on page 30. Follow the USB hub manufacturer's instructions for proper set-up and use of the hub.

Connecting your RocketPod Stack to a FireWire Daisy-Chain

When daisy-chaining a RocketPod stack, you connect the FireWire port on the DockPod to your computer or previous device in the chain. If the RocketPod stack is not last in the chain, you must also connect the right-hand FireWire port (when viewed from the back) of a stacked-on RocketPod module to the next device in the chain. For maximum performance, place this module first in the stack (closest to the DockPod).

For daisy-chaining FireWire devices from other manufacturers, check the manufacturers' instructions, though typically it does not matter which FireWire port(s) you connect the FireWire cable(s) to.

Let's consider a couple of options using the following illustrations as reference. (Any USB cables and power cords are not shown.)

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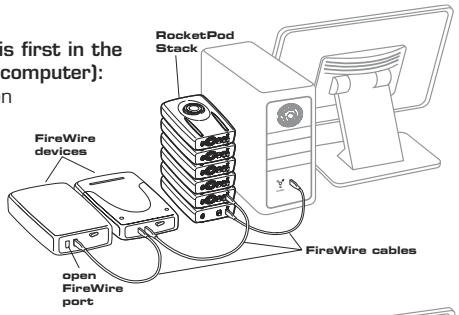
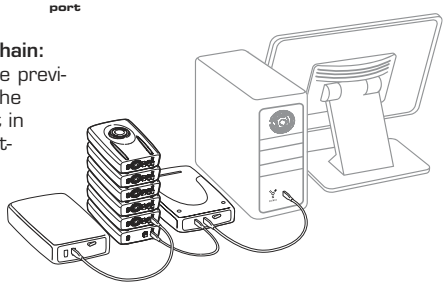
If your RocketPod stack is first in the chain (starting from the computer): As shown in the illustration at right, connect the DockPod to your computer; then connect the right-hand FireWire port of a stacked-on RocketPod module to the next FireWire device in the chain.



If your RocketPod stack is NOT first in the chain: Connect the DockPod to the previous device in the chain. If the RocketPod stack is not last in the chain, connect the right-hand FireWire port of a stacked-on RocketPod module to the next FireWire device in the chain.



TROUBLESHOOTING/ FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

Q: My DockPod won't power on.
A: Check to make sure all connections are secure. When the DockPod is powered on, the power button will light up blue.

Q: My computer does not seem to recognize the DockPod.
A: DockPod is not a desktop device, meaning it will not appear on your computer's desktop or in My Computer. Only RocketPod modules, such as the DrivePod, will appear on the desktop.

Q: How many RocketPod modules can you stack onto a DockPod?
A: You can stack up to five RocketPod modules onto a DockPod. If you have any USB hubs connected to the same computer as the DockPod, the number of USB 2.0 RocketPod modules you can stack on the DockPod decreases by the number of hubs, whether the DockPod is connected to a hub or not. The number of FireWire modules you can stack is not affected by USB hubs, so you can still stack up to five modules in total by combining USB 2.0 and FireWire modules in the same stack. For example: if you have two USB hubs connected to your computer, you can stack up to three USB 2.0

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RocketPod modules rather than five. However, you can stack on two FireWire RocketPod modules, for a total of five modules.

Q: Do I need to turn my RocketPod modules on when I stack them?
A: No. If your DockPod is turned on, stacked-on RocketPod modules will power on automatically. If the DockPod is turned off, any stacked-on modules will power on when you turn on the DockPod.

Q: Do I need to turn my RocketPod modules off before I remove them from a stack?
A: No. Anyway, in most cases you simply can't because the power is controlled from the DockPod. If you want to remove a RocketPod module from a stack, you only need to dismount the device before removing it. After the device is dismounted, it will still be powered on but it is perfectly safe to remove it. If the module you wish to remove has one or more modules stacked above it, you must dismount and remove these modules first.

Q: Can I select which RocketPod modules in a stack to turn on and which to turn off?
A: No. Power to stacked-on modules is controlled via the DockPod. When you turn on the DockPod, all stacked-on modules will power on. If you turn off the DockPod, all stacked-on modules will power off.

Before you turn off the DockPod, be sure to dismount all modules.

Q: Do I need to use both the USB 2.0 and FireWire interfaces of my DockPod in order for it to work?
A: No, you can use only one interface if you so choose. DockPod comes with both interfaces to accommodate both USB 2.0 users and FireWire users.

Q: Can I connect DockPod to a USB or FireWire expansion card?
A: Yes.

Q: Can I connect my DockPod to more than one computer at the same time?
A: Yes, actually you can. It is possible to connect the USB 2.0 interface to one computer and the FireWire interface to another computer. Any USB 2.0 RocketPod modules in your stack will be recognized by one computer and only that computer; the FireWire modules in the same stack will be recognized by the other computer and only that other computer. You cannot use a RocketPod module on two computers simultaneously. (The up-coming NASPod will allow you to make your DrivePod(s) accessible to multiple users over an Ethernet network.) If you connect the DockPod to a computer or hub that only supports USB 1.x, any stacked on USB 2.0 RocketPod modules will

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operate at USB 1.x speeds. You will need to follow any necessary set-up instructions for each RocketPod module, as described in their respective User's Guides.

Q: I stacked on a RocketPod module and it powered on but my computer did not recognize it.
A: Make sure you properly followed the set-up instructions for that device. Each RocketPod peripheral has it's own set-up requirements independent of the DockPod. Also, check to make sure that you are using the correct interface and that it is properly connected. For example, if the RocketPod module you stacked onto your DockPod uses a USB 2.0 interface, make sure you properly connect the DockPod's USB 2.0 interface to your computer or USB hub.

Q: I have a RocketPod module stacked onto my DockPod, but the Stack light is not on.
A: First, make sure your DockPod is turned on. If it is, the most likely cause is the module is not properly seated on the DockPod. Remove the module and re-connect it, following the connection procedure in this guide. If your stacked-on modules are recognized by your computer and functioning fine but the Stack light is not illuminated, there is a problem with the light itself.

Q: The voltage meter doesn't seem to work properly.
A: Like the Stack light, the voltage meter is only active when one or more RocketPod modules are stacked onto the DockPod and the DockPod is turned on.

Q: Do I need to worry about the exposed Stack&Play connector when my DockPod or RocketPod stack is powered on?
A: Since every RocketPod peripheral has a connector built into the top, you will always have an exposed or free connector with the last (top) module in a stack. Free connectors are inactive; they do not have power, so it is perfectly safe to touch them. However, we do recommend that you cover the free connector using the Connector Cap that comes with every stack-on RocketPod peripheral in order to protect the connector and prevent dust from collecting on it.

Q: When I leave my computer idle for a while and come back, my RocketPod modules won't work properly.
A: The most likely cause is that your computer is going into sleep mode. The immediate solution is to restart your computer. To prevent this problem from recurring, set your computer to never go into sleep mode. (See the documentation that came with your computer for instructions.)

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Solving Technical Problems

If you experience a problem with your AcomData product, you should take the following actions in the order specified:

1. Re-read this guide carefully to make sure that you followed all of the instructions properly.
2. Consult the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) section of this guide. The FAQs will have answers to most questions.
3. If the issue you are having is still not resolved by using the FAQs, please contact Technical Support using one of the following options:
   a) via the online Technical Support form at our web site, www.acomdata.com;
   b) via e-mail at techsupport@acomdata.com;
   c) by telephone at (909) 348-0680

Glossary

Bit - The smallest unit of digital data. In binary code, a bit is represented logically as a either a 1 or a 0.

Buffer - RAM cache that temporarily stores data so it can be delivered to a device as it is needed.

Bus - An electronic link that allows the transmission of data between digital devices, such as computers and computer peripherals.

Byte - A unit of digital information, usually made up of eight bits.

Daisy Chain - A type of connection whereby devices, such as computer peripherals, are linked together in series. When data is transmitted, it is passed from device to device in the chain en route to its destination.

Data Stream - The flow of data between digital devices such as computers and hard drives.

Driver - Software that enables communication between a computer and a peripheral.

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FireWire (IEEE 1394x) - A serial bus interface standard offering high-speed communications and real-time data services. Cable length is limited to 4.5 m, but up to 16 cables can be daisy-chained, yielding a total length of 72 m. It allows the connection of up to 63 peripherals in a tree-like structure. It allows peer-to-peer device communication to take place without using system memory or the CPU. It is designed to support plug-and-play and hot swapping.

Gigabyte - 1,024 megabytes (binary); 1,000 megabytes (decimal), or approximately one billion bytes.

Hardware - Physical components of a computer system (computer, hard drives, printers, etc.)

Hub - A device which links peripherals together onto the same data bus.

Interface - Junction between two items of hardware or software for the exchange of data.

Isochronous - A form of data transmission that guarantees a certain minimum data rate, as required for time-dependent data such as video or audio.

Mb (Megabit) - One million bits.

Mbps (Megabits per second) - A data transmission speed of one million bits per second. Data transmissions are measured in bits (kilobits, megabits etc) per second.

MB (Megabyte) - 1,048,576 bytes (binary); 1,000,000 bytes (decimal).

Operating System (OS) - Software that controls the assignment and use of hardware and software resources.

Peripheral - A generic term for hard drives, printers, scanners and other discrete devices that add functionality to a computer.

Port - A connection which enables compatible peripherals to send and receive data.

Software - A set of instructions that enable a computer to perform pre-programmed functions in the order specified by the user.

Storage - Any equipment which stores data, such as hard drives, CDs, and DVDs.

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USB (Universal Serial Bus) - An interface technology for the serial transmission of digital data. The original standard (USB 1) could transmit data at speeds of up to 12 Mbps. USB 2.0 has a maximum throughput of 480 Mbps – up to 40 times faster than USB 1. USB is a host-based technology, meaning USB devices need to be connected to a computer—either directly or indirectly via a hub—in order to communicate with each other. This is in contrast to a peer-to-peer technology, such as FireWire (IEEE 1394), which does not need a host computer for communication between devices.

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